

PERS RFP Questions & Answers

1. *Approximately how many lock boxes will be needed? Lock boxes must be deployed for clients living within the City of Ithaca Fire District. There are currently 54 lock boxes deployed there, and TCOFA currently has sufficient inventory. In the future, if more lock boxes are needed, it will be the responsibility of the vendor to provide them.*
2. *Of the 120 low-income subscribers, how many pay \$0? Currently 102 subscribers pay \$0.*
3. *Do you currently have cellular communicators installed, and if so how many? We do not currently have cellular communicators installed.*
4. *What is TCOFA's PERS install % growth over the past 3 years? The number of unduplicated PERS clients served over the last full three years is as follows: 637 clients in 2011; 636 clients in 2012; 621 clients in 2013.*
5. *Does TCOFA prefer to purchase or rent PERS equipment going forward? TCOFA would prefer not to purchase or rent PERS equipment going forward; rather that PERS subscribers rent or purchase the PERS equipment directly from the vendor.*
6. *For the 453 current Tompkins County Office of Aging clients, what is the budget amount allocated for this PERS program? The budget amount allocated for TCOFA's PERS program in 2014 is \$87,000.*
7. *On the Submission Instructions page it says "it is the respondent's responsibility to ascertain whether any addenda have issued prior to submitting their proposal"; where do respondent's check to see if there if there was any addenda added? Such information would be noted on the Tompkins County Purchasing website in relation to this RFP.*
8. *How many staff members will need to be trained? There are currently three (3) staff members who are trained in PERS and divide the coverage responsibilities among their other duties.*
9. *When it says the county staff members will "troubleshoot", does this mean that they will take incoming phone calls from the clients to troubleshoot? Currently TCOFA staff take incoming phone calls from clients to troubleshoot when clients call with problems or concerns about their PERS machines. TCOFA staff attempts to resolve the issue over the phone, and if that is not possible, they make a home visit. In the future, TCOFA staff would follow troubleshooting protocols as established by the vendor.*

10. Pg. 2, Scope; says services shall include: “monitoring and maintaining PERS equipment”, if TCOFA staff are performing installations, removals, testing and troubleshooting, in what way is the provider to “maintain” the PERS equipment? *The vendor would be responsible for maintaining functioning PERS equipment in the homes of subscribers. For example, if a PERS machine is found to be malfunctioning, the vendor would be responsible for providing a functioning replacement machine for the client. If pendant replacements or 12 volt battery replacements are necessary, these would also be provided by the vendor. TCOFA staff would perform the installations.*
11. Are the clients who are paying themselves responsible for equipment replacements or repairs for such things as lost or damaged equipment? If they are responsible, does the provider work out the payment directly with the client or will the TCOFA staff communicate the payment for such reimbursements? *Currently, TCOFA PERS clients are responsible for lost or damaged equipment. In the future, the provider would be responsible for all client billing. It is expected that when interfacing with clients, TCOFA staff would provide information on behalf of the vendor regarding monthly fees and fees for lost or damaged equipment. However, billing and collections would be the responsibility of the vendor.*
12. For clients on a low income, does the county pay for such costs related to the previous question? *No. All PERS clients are billed for lost or damaged equipment.*
13. Is the proposed per unit cost that we are to submit referring to the monthly fee? *Yes, the monthly fee charged to a client.*
14. If we have different PERS systems that are different prices, are we to include these systems and their advantages and the different prices as well? *Yes*
15. Is TCOFA going to own the PERS equipment provided by the provider as it did in the past? If yes, are we to include the cost of the equipment in the monthly monitoring fee or are we supposed to add a separate fee for the purchase of the equipment? *TCOFA would prefer not to purchase or rent PERS equipment going forward; rather that PERS subscribers rent or purchase the PERS equipment directly from the vendor.*
16.
 - a. What is the manufacturer and model of the current PERS equipment TCOFA is using for each client? *Linear 2400B*
 - b. How old is the current PERS equipment and if some are newer than others, do have some sort of breakdown of numbers of how many a certain age; 100 are 5 years old, 100 are 8 years old, 75 are 10 years old etc..? *The age of TCOFA’s current inventory of machines is as follows: 72 units are 9 years old; 30 units are 8 years old; 368 units are 7 years old; 149 units are 6 years old.*

- c. Is there an option for the provider to utilize the TCOFA's PERS equipment that is currently in each client's home? *Yes; however, please note the age of the equipment as outlined in item b*
 - d. If yes, will there be a fee to purchase such equipment? *No*
 - e. If yes, will it be a reduced fee and what will the fee be? If there won't be a fee, the monthly cost to be charged for each client will be greatly reduced since the cost of the equipment is normally incorporated into the monthly fee to compensate for its cost. Depending on whether there will be a cost to utilize TCOFA's equipment or if there will be a reduced rate to purchase the equipment, will affect the cost of the monthly fee that we are to include in the proposal. *(see item d above)*
17. How many of the 453 current clients have phone lines in their home that are:
- a. Traditional land lines? *338*
 - b. VOIP or internet phone lines? *115 Time Warner Cable customers*
 - c. Only have cell phones or no phones? *0*
- 18.
- a. Regarding the sliding fee scale;
 - i. what is the sliding scale: *See attached document: PERS Monthly Billing Rates and Codes 2014*
 - ii. what are the income limits: *See attached document: PERS Monthly Billing Rates and Codes 2014*
 - iii. who determines what each client can pay: *Currently TCOFA Outreach staff interview clients and fill out a worksheet documenting household income.*
 - iv. how do we include a sliding scale: *TCOFA is interested in considering creative approaches which include graduated options to make the monthly fee affordable for clients at varying incomes while still offering competitive rates.*
 - b. Will TCOFA subsidize low income clients who are to be put on the sliding scale? *No, it is expected that the low income clients would be subsidized through the structure of the fee scale itself.*

- c. If not, out the 120 clients who are low income, what are the rates they are paying and how many clients are paying each rate, i.e. if a client is paying only \$15 per month; how many are paying at that rate, if a client is paying \$10 per month; how many are paying at that rate, if a client is paying \$0; how many are paying at that rate. Also, how many clients are paying the full price, can we have the numbers in some sort of an aggregate; like 330 clients pay \$36, 100 clients pay \$30 etc. These numbers will substantially affect the regular monthly fee for those not on a low income that we are to include in the proposal if the provider is not going to be subsidized from TCOFA for these losses. In other words, the regular monthly fee will need to be raised to compensate for the losses that the provider will have to endure for low income clients if TCOFA does not subsidize these low income clients. *See attached document "PERS Sliding Scale Subscribers June 2014" for the current number of PERS clients paying at various sliding scale rates. Note that depending upon the vendor equipment options and fees charged, the number of clients may increase.*
- d. What is the regular price that clients who are not low income currently paying per month and are there currently installation fees or fees for lost buttons and service etc..? If there are currently other fees what are they? *See attached document, "PERS Sliding Scale Subscribers June 2014" for the current number of PERS clients paying at various sliding scale rates. There are currently no installation fees. There is a \$55 fee for a lost pendant and a \$190 fee for a lost/damaged machine.*
- e. For clients who are low income and are part of the sliding scale, who pays for equipment replacements or repairs for such things as lost or damaged equipment? *The client is responsible for paying the fees for lost pendants and lost/damaged machines.*
- f. Finally, it says on pg. 3 that one of the factors that the proposal is based on is the sliding fee scale. If TCOFA is going to be subsidizing low income clients, how will the sliding fee scale make any difference in the proposal? *TCOFA will not be subsidizing low income clients.*
19. If TCOFA will be subsidizing low income clients, what program does the funding originate and is there any anticipation for such funding to decrease? *TCOFA will not be subsidizing low income clients.*
20. Regarding compensation for TCOFA staff;
- a. Does TCOFA have a desired fee structure, i.e. to be paid per hour, salary or flat rate per installations and service call? *TCOFA is willing to consider a variety of fee structure options.*
- b. Does TCOFA desire a minimum amount to be paid? *TCOFA has not set a minimum figure for consideration.*

21. On pg. 3, it mentions how TCOFA will review and evaluate the proposals and mentions the weight factors for each.
- Regarding “client billing details” what details will score higher points and what will lower points? *See Program Requirements #5. Vendors should explain their billing process in detail. Responses which do not cover these requirements will score fewer points.*
 - Regarding “how the program will maximize the level of service provided in the most efficient manner”, is there anything specific that will make scores higher or lower? *Highest quality service at lowest cost for clients will make the scores higher.*
 - Regarding “the provider’s capacity to deliver reliable, high quality services”, is there anything specific that will make scores higher or lower? *The details should be demonstrated and evident in the vendor’s response.*
 - Regarding “the provider’s ability to provide and maintain PERS equipment and infrastructure that will interface with a wide range of technologies in clients’ homes”, what technologies in the clients’ homes is this referring to and is there anything specific that will make scores higher or lower? *The technology includes various types of Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) systems and cellular technologies. The vendor should demonstrate its capability for interface with these technologies.*
 - Finally, it states that each weight factor is 33%. However, in each category, how much weight (or points) does each thing carry, i.e. out of the 33% in the first category, what percentage of the 33% is “price per unit cost” considered? What percentage of the 33% is the “sliding fee scale”? What percentage of the 33% is “client billing” considered? What percentage of 33% is “level of compensation for TCOFA staff time” considered? And so on for the rest? *Equal consideration will be given to each subcategory.*
22. If the provider is not local, will that in any way affect who is awarded the bid if such a provider will still be able to properly train all TCOFA staff members in person and regularly come to TCOFA to meet with the staff to ensure everything is running smoothly? *No*
23. The RFP states a quantity of 621 clients in 2013 and currently 453. Is there a reason for the change (funding, managed care, etc)? *Those numbers provide two different measurements. There were 621 unduplicated individuals served throughout the year in 2013. This includes all the clients who received service at any point during that year (eg clients who came on and off the program). In contrast, there are currently 453 PERS units in deployment in clients’ homes. This number is more of a point-in-time count of active clients with machines. For comparison’s sake, to date in 2014, there have been 544 unduplicated clients served.*
24. Are the clients billed a portion of the monthly rate (cost share)? *Currently, the clients are billed in full, according to where they fall according to their household income on the sliding fee scale.*

25. Will the OFA determine rates for each current and new subscriber? *The provider would establish the rates/fee scale. OFA staff would communicate those rates to current/new subscribers and determine what each subscriber would pay based on household income.*

26. Will the OFA staff be on the vendor's payroll, or will the vendor be compensating the OFA? *The vendor would compensate the OFA.*

27. To clarify, according to the RFP:

- OFA would like the vendor to do all the billing, including a sliding scale for low/no income *Yes*
- The vendor will compensate the OFA/staff for installs, service and removals *Yes*
- There will be no "unit cost" to the OFA as the vendor builds the unit cost into the monthly fee *Yes*
- The only compensation to the OFA would be for labor as noted above, with no additional revenue sharing *Yes*

PERS Monthly Billing Rates and Codes 2014

Code	Fee Description	Fee Amount
1	Single: less than \$900	0.00
2	Single: less than \$900	3.50
3	Single: \$900-1000	7.25
4	Single: \$1001-1200	11.00
5	Single: \$1201-1367	14.50
6	Single: \$1368-1535	18.00
7	Single: \$1536-1703	21.50
8	Single: \$1704-1871	25.25
9	Single: \$1872-2039	28.75
10	Single: \$2040-2200	32.50
11	Single: \$2201 and up	36.00

	Married Couples	
	Pendant for spouse	0.00
12	Married: less than \$1200	0.00
13	Married: less than \$1200	3.50
14	Married: \$1201-1376	7.25
15	Married: \$1377-1552	11.00
16	Married: \$1553-1728	14.50
17	Married: \$1729-1904	18.00
18	Married: \$1905-2080	21.50
19	Married: \$2081-2256	25.25
20	Married: \$2257-2432	28.75
21	Married: \$2433-2600	32.50
22	Married: \$2601 and up	36.00

TCOFA PERS Clients as of June 2014

Unit Price	Number of Clients
\$0.00	102
\$3.50	22
\$6.25	2
\$7.25	26
\$11.00	68
\$14.50	50
\$18.00	24
\$21.50	13
\$25.25	21
\$28.75	18
\$32.50	9
\$36.00	107
Total	462